

passage through Iran, Iran, not Iraq but Iran. I guess we made a mistake as far as what country to invade.

But seriously, let me just read several excerpts from the Sunday editions of the New York Times. "The final report of the commission investigating the September 11 attacks will offer new evidence of cooperative ties between Iran and al Qaeda including information drawn from intelligence reports suggesting that Iran provided several of the hijackers with safe passage in the year before the attacks, government official said. The evidence raised enough questions about why the Bush administration focused on the possibility of Iraqi ties to be Osama bin Laden's terror network after 9-11 when there may have been far more extensive evidence of the Iranian connection. The panel had recently obtained intelligence showing that Iran had ordered guards at its border stations not to stop the passports of al Qaeda members from Saudi Arabia who were moving through Iran after training at terrorists camps in Afghanistan."

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My memory is this Iran, according to the President, was a member of the axis of evil club, but as you pointed out, there is no collaborative relationship according to the commission between Iraq and Iran. But why did we end up attacking Iraq rather than Iran?

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I will answer that question. The reason we attacked Iraq is that the day after September 11, maybe it was 2 days after, it has been reported that the Secretary of Defense goes in to the President and says now is our chance, now is our chance to go after Iraq. This was like 48 hours after September 11. There was no evidence whatsoever that Iraq was associated with September 11, but this President and his political advisers knew one thing. They knew if they could fool the American people into believing that Saddam Hussein was behind September 11, the neo-cons could con the American people into supporting a war in Iraq, and to some degree, their maliciousness was successful to the detriment of our proud men and women in service who are there tonight in the heat of Iraq, 130 degrees, suffering, dying in the sands of Iraq because an American President's administration was not forthright with the American people and consciously, willfully gave false information to our fellow countrymen.

This is not just a little happenstance. We have a memo from a political operative of the President about how to talk about this. This was a cold-blooded, calculated act, and you talk about having your missed priority and what country you would be involved in.

I have been asked by one of my constituents if I have seen the movie "Fahrenheit 9/11." He said, JAY, is it true, did the President allow the family members of Osama bin Laden, who

are Saudi Arabian, to fly out of the country when all the other planes were grounded in the country? Did this administration let his friends from Saudi Arabia fly out of the country without a full and thorough investigation of their relationship? Did that really happen?

The sad fact is, yes, it did, and we have discovered that, in fact, did occur in our Committee on Financial Services hearing, and I pressed for an answer of who made that decision. I never got that answer, who made that decision, and 3 days later, the President is on the south portico of the White House smoking cigars with Prince Bandahar, the ambassador of Saudi Arabia, where two-thirds of the terrorists came from that attacked this country, and we let their families fly out without even a decent interrogation of them. Talk about having a mixed-up relationship about who our enemies are and who our friends are.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Does it come as a surprise to you that at least according to Bob Woodward in his most recent book, a book that was praised by the White House, in fact, there are excerpts of it I understand on the President's campaign Web site, but in that particular book, it was noted by the author that Prince Bandahar was informed of the attack on Iraq prior to the Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Let me go back just for a moment, because I know we are wrapping up, to another observation by Mr. Woodward, and this I would suggest is where ideology colors reality and affects the truth, the objective truth.

The passion of some in this administration, and I put beside you there a Newsweek cover with a picture of the Vice President DICK CHENEY, emblazoned that says how DICK CHENEY sold the war. It was clear that this individual was obsessed with Iraq, for whatever reason. I am not questioning his motives.

But in the book by Mr. Woodward, it is noted on page 175, for those who might have it, that the Secretary of State "detected a kind of fever in CHENEY. He was not the steady, unemotional rock that he had witnessed a dozen years earlier during the run-up to the Gulf War. The Vice President was hell-bent for action against Saddam Hussein." It is very dangerous when ideology colors the objective truth and reality. In the end, it gets us in a mess, and this is where we are now.

Mr. INSLEE. Well, I am going to close with a couple of comments.

We are here to discuss a basic principle of American democracy, and that is, accountability, that people in public service need to be held accountable, both for their successes and their failures.

There is a group that we should recognize for valor and effectiveness and honor in our government and our government personnel, and that is our Army, navy, air corps, Coast Guard, marines, who are serving in Iraq. Those

folks deserve to be held accountable by being praised for their tremendous service to this country in difficult circumstances tonight, and they are still continuing to suffer the pangs of war tonight, and we have come here to make sure that their sacrifice is not forgotten and that we treat them with as great an honor as we can and that we restore our Veterans Administration health care system so that when they come home they are not exposed to the cuts in the veterans health care system that this administration has proposed.

This group of public servants, we cannot forget their contribution. It should never be forgotten, but there is another group of public servants whose massive failures and deceit should not be forgotten either, and that is the Bush administration who has made at least 10 major failure, falsehoods, negligence and carelessness, to the great cost of the American public, and those public servants should not be forgotten in their failure either and should be held accountable, and we will continue to have this discussion until they are.

Would the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) like to close? Do you have any closing comments?

Mr. DELAHUNT. No, I concur with those sentiments.

#### OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2004, AT PAGE H5851

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURR) assumed the chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair lays before the House the following enrolled bill:

S. 15. An act to amend the Public Health Services Act to provide protections and countermeasures against chemical, radiological, or nuclear agents that may be used in a terrorist attack against the United States by giving the National Institutes of Health contracting flexibility, infrastructure improvements, and expediting the scientific peer review process, and streamlining the Food and Drug Administration approval process of countermeasures.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ABERCROMBIE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of physician's advice.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. FROST (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Ms. KILPATRICK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal business.